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Etheldreda House,
ELY.

ELY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

TO: The Chairman and Members,
Ely Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen - I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 1955:-

1. STATISTICS: During 1955, the usual statistics have been kept and are available. These are not included in my report.

2. a. Ambulances: Two Ambulances are stationed at Ely both being operated by the Isle of Ely County Council. One is for infectious diseases and the other for non-infectious diseases.

The Littleport St. John Ambulance continues to work under the agency agreement with the County Council. I have, once again, to comment on the excellent service rendered by this vehicle and to emphasize the value of these services, not only to the local area, but also in adjacent areas. The Ely and Littleport St. John Divisions continue to supply Attendants for these two vehicles. It is, perhaps, not realized generally, how much effort is demanded of the members of these two Divisions who, so willingly and gladly devote many of their leisure hours to these duties.

b. Nursing and Clinic Arrangements: These are the same as for previous years. The District is much indebted to the District Nurses for their willing and efficient efforts.

c. Hospitals: (i) Tower Hospital for Chronic Sick.
(ii) The Isolation Hospital.
(iii) The Grange Maternity Home.
These Hospitals are under the control of the Regional Hospital Board.

3. WATER:

(a). The supply for Ely, including Stuntney, Adelaide, Prickwillow and Chettisham is obtained from two wells and one borehole at the Council's Waterworks at Isleham. The condition of the plant including the pumping and chloramine equipment proved to be satisfactory throughout the year.

The quantity and the quality of the water has also proved satisfactory.

There have been no major breakdowns during the twelve months.

In previous reports, I have drawn attention to my concern regarding improvements to the water storage in the City. During the year under review, I can only report extremely slow progress. The Council's Consulting Engineers are proceeding as expeditiously as possible with the preparation of the necessary plans. I must, however, stress the

feeling of great urgency which I have in regard to the Water Works improvements and more especially the increased water storage in Ely itself.

Again, although there have been no breaks in the 12 inch pumping main during the year, I feel it my duty to underline the sense of urgency which I feel in regard to this problem. I hope that the survey, which should be carried out during the coming year, will result in efficient action at the earliest possible moment as, from previous knowledge, I am confident that such a survey can only disclose a very disquietening state of affairs.

(b). (i) Four bacteriological examinations were made during the year by the Public Health Service Laboratory at Cambridge, and all proved satisfactory.

(ii) The water has no plumbo-solvent action.

(iii) No contamination was discovered during the year and, therefore, no action in respect of this has been necessary.

(iv) 97% of the dwelling houses in the area are supplied with water direct from public water mains.

4% of the dwelling houses in the area are supplied by stand-pipe.

It is estimated that the percentage of the population supplied approximates to the figures given above for houses.

4. SEWAGE:

(i) Extensions:

The only extension during the year has been to the new housing site, North of the present New Barns Avenue.

(ii) Sewage Disposal Works:

The Gauge, installed at the request of the Ministry at the Disposal Works, has given certain results which are at present under consideration. I much regret that there is no material progress to report on the improvement of the Disposal Works. I am not satisfied with the effluent obtained but can see no chance of improvement until the plans for the improvement of the Disposal Works have been implemented.

(iii) There has been some improvement in the Prickwillow Disposal Works during the year.

(iv) The open water course in Upherds Lane, to which reference was made last year has been dealt with and there are now only some 3 other similar cases outstanding.

5. HOUSING:

(a) Number of houses which on inspection were considered to be unfit for human habitation or in a condition prejudicial to health 204

(b) Number of houses, the defects in which were remedied in consequence of informal action .. 85

(c) Number of representations made to the local authority with a view to:-

(i) The serving of notices requiring the execution of works 0

(ii) The making of demolition orders 2

(iii) The making of closing orders 0

(d) Number of formal notices served requiring the execution of works 0

(e) (i) Number of demolition orders made 2

(ii) Number of closing orders made 0

(f) Number of houses in respect of which an undertaking was accepted 0

(g) Number of houses demolished 4

(h) Number of formal notices served under the Public Health Act 1936 1

The usual housing problems have been encountered during the year under review and it is felt that they will be present for a good many years to come. A programme has been submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government which will allow for the demolition of approximately 20 houses annually. The very worst properties will receive priority and it is hoped to deal with these in the first five years either by clearance area procedure or by means of individual demolition orders.

This year saw the commencement of the clearance of Victoria Square and I hope to see the houses in the Square demolished in the very near future.

One of the biggest problems in the future will be the question of rents. The differences between the rent of a private cottage and even a pre-war Council house can be quite large. These large rents can be particularly hard on certain elderly people and widows who are unfortunate enough to live in substandard properties and may have to move eventually.

Owing to unavoidable delay met with in acquiring the new housing site - North of New Barns Avenue. I regret to say no houses have been completed during the year.

I wish to draw attention to the hard work carried out by the Sanitary Inspector in his efforts to grapple with the ever present problems associated with housing.

6. SCHOOLS:

In view of present developments, I have no useful comments to make for this year.

7. MILK: Generally speaking the milk supply position in Ely is excellent, most of the milk sold coming from tuberculin tested herds, or it is pasteurised or both.

The Milk & Dairies Regulations (1949) not only lay down necessary provisions and precautions to eliminate as much as possible any risk of contamination or infection in relation to the production of milk and its storage, the cleaning and storage of all utensils, appliances etc., connected therewith, but they also set up penalties for the contravention of such Regulations.

If cases of dirty and insufficiently cleansed milk bottles are brought to the notice of either the Sanitary Inspector or myself, such cases will be reported immediately to the Council with a view to the instigation of early and vigorous action.

On the other hand, the general public must realise that milk bottles are intended only for milk and not for storage of paraffin, oil and other harmful liquids.

I wish also to impress on the public generally, the need to discontinue the dirty habit of leaving empty milk bottles on the pavement, particularly where they can be targets for passing animals. This practice is not in any way fair to the producers and suppliers of milk.

8. INFECTIOUS DISEASES:

(a) 155 notifications of infectious disease were received.

Total is made up as follows:-

Measles	124
Pneumonia	19
Infective Hepatitis	3
Scarlet Fever	1
Paratyphoid B	1
Sonne Dysentery	1
Poliomyelitis	4
Puerperal Pyrexia	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1
	155

(b) Disinfection of premises etc., is regularly carried out in cases of notifiable disease; also when infection is reported, or requests are received for any special reasons.

(c) Once again, I have to report that there have been no cases of Diphtheria in the District during the year. Every effort must be maintained by everyone concerned with this problem to ensure that every child is adequately immunised according to modern practice either by the Family Doctor or at one of the County Council Clinics. Diphtheria now-a-days is so rare that many have never seen the ghastly cases which were so frequent 25 and more years ago. If such cases had been seen, there is no doubt that all parents would insist on their children's immunization.

(d) Tuberculosis: 5 new cases were notified during the year. After making necessary adjustment, there are now the following numbers on the Register:-

	Respiratory:	Non-Respiratory:
Males	26	Nil
Females	19	4

Compared with 1954, the total figures show a decrease of 3 cases.

9. FOOD:

(a) (i) 12 Premises are registered for the preparation of Sausages and Preserved Foods.

(ii) 27 Premises are registered for the storage and sale of Ice Cream.

(iii) There is one private slaughterhouse at Willow Walk, Ely. Meat Inspection is carried out by a Veterinary Surgeon.

(b) The Food Hygiene Regulations (1955) come into operation on 1st January 1956.

The Regulations, which are of a detailed and comprehensive character, lay down provisions in respect of the hygienic handling of food and the construction and maintenance of premises including staff canteens, stalls etc., where food is handled. They do not apply to slaughter-houses, ware-houses, cold stores etc., (other than staff canteens in such premises) which are covered by other Regulations.

These Regulations will give the Council's Officers greatly increased opportunities of raising, and where necessary, of enforcing the general standards of food hygiene in the District.

There are a number of food shops in the District, where strenuous efforts have been made by the proprietors and owners to improve standards by the provision of excellent equipment, washing facilities etc., I wish it was possible to mention such premises by name in this report, so that the public could support such efforts.

I would emphasize, however, that the excellence of such premises can be rendered quite useless by a dirty or unthinking employee. Strict personal cleanliness is the basic rule for every individual, without exception, be he or she, owner, manager or assistant, engaged in food handling.

Lastly, during the course of my daily work, I am often appalled at the awful conditions under which food is kept, cooked and served in many households. It is useless to expect official regulations to produce full results, if the houses into which the food eventually finds its way do not deal with that food hygienically.

(c) Once again, I would draw attention to the need for special vigilance by those who handle and sell processed meat (Corned Beef, Ham etc.).

10. MISCELLANEOUS:

(i) Insect Pest Control:
All necessary disinfestations have been carried out during the year.

(ii) Shops:
The Sanitary Inspector has, under the Shops Act 1950, during the year carried out routine inspections. Some improvement has been noted, but there is still much room for improvement.

(iii) Rodent Control:
227 Treatments were carried out during the year, and the Council's Refuse Tip receives regular attention. Better work could be done if the citizens of Ely gave more co-operation by reporting rodent infestations.

(iv) Smoke Abatement:
No serious smoke nuisances had to be dealt with during the year. General watch was, however, maintained.

(v) Moveable Dwellings:
Eleven caravans were licensed during the year. I must record, yet again, my profound dissatisfaction with the present useless legislation relating to moveable dwellings, caravans etc. Public Health problems which may at any time give rise to great anxiety, cannot be dealt with under the Public Health Act 1936 provisions, and, in my opinion, it is high time that urgent amending legislation was considered by the Authorities.

(vi) Factories:
The usual routine inspections have been carried out.

(vii) Common Lodging Houses:
There is one registered Common Lodging House in the District and this is periodically inspected and conditions have been found to be satisfactory.

11. PERSONAL:

The Sanitary Inspector Mr. H. Smith, M.S.I.A., A.R.San.I. left the Council's employ in December, much to my personal regret. I am most grateful to him for all his cheerful co-operation and help, which I shall miss.

I shall look forward to welcoming his successor in the New Year.

To the Surveyor & Water Engineer, Mr. J. V. G. Shilston, A.M.I.C.E., M.I.Mun.E. etc., and his staff, I also express my thanks for much assistance and advice on technical matters. It is indeed a pleasure to have such pleasant colleagues with whom to work.

I have the honour to be,
Ladies & Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) K. S. MAURICE SMITH,

Medical Officer of Health,
Ely Urban District Council.

1st September 1956.

CITY OF ELY U.D.C.
-5 SEP 1956
CLERK'S DEPARTMENT